

Chegin—the Center of Russian Racewalking Success

by Paul Warburton
IAAF Press Release

Saransk, Russia. Victor Chegin's wife isn't that fond of racewalking. It's nothing against the sport as such, it's just that she doesn't get to see much of her high-profile husband when there is a major athletics championship to prepare for. And as that's most of the time, there has to be a high level of tolerance between the two.

Chegin is the head coach at the Center for Olympic Performance in Saransk Russia—the only performance center in the world dedicated to walking. The 45-year-old former athlete jokes about being the 'big boss', but he's responsible for Russia's finest at the event. And as that meant eight that out of the eleven walkers at last summer's World Championships in Osaka are under his wing, it's easy to imagine the demands made on the man who runs the center near a forest a couple of kilometers outside Saransk.

Twenty years of nurturing his beloved project has produced an athletics facility as good, if not better, than anything comparable in the world. Today, he was a proud observer as the Head of the Russian Athletics Federation opened up a special 330 meter all-weather track at the center.

Why the odd distance? Because, according to Chegin, it's easy then to calculate three laps to the kilometer required in training sessions from his charges. *(Ed. So why not 333 1/3 meters?)*

If it seems odd it's taken a while to get a track at the facility, it's because a short drive away in a forest clearing, must be the only purpose-built walking course in the world. A path has been tarmaced to walking perfection to produce a 3.2 km loop, marked every 100 yards and cleared every morning by a special machine. *(Ed. again. So why 100 yards and not 100 meters?. What do the Russians know about yards?)*

The facility is reserved only for the center's walkers and invited guests, and this morning there were coaches scattered around the loop checking the progress of those competing in Saturday's IAAF Racewalking Challenge. (Note, This was written last September.)

It's not hard to see why Russian women filled two out of three podium spots in Osaka. Both Olga Kaniskina and Tatiana Shemyakina were being put through their paces along with three World champions, a World record holder, and a host of others loping up and down in 1 km splits of 4 minutes.

Starting later than the others is Irina Stankina, who was the youngest ever IAAF World Champion when she triumphed in Gothenburg 12 years ago. According to Chegin, Stankina's 1995 success somewhat appropriately paved the way for even more attention to the

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fabulous Saransk set-up—and therefore improved funding.

The current annual budget is around \$2 million dollars with one aim in mind—walking success for Russia. The weight room is fixed up to improve walking strength: the sauna and plunge pool are augmented by a massage and physio center manned by eight staff including physiotherapists, doctors, and nurses.

It was worth noting they all leaped to attention when Chegin led the way into the suite, as did the cafeteria staff at the “Victory Restaurant”, which feeds everyone. Even the cleaners seem in awe of the man, who is surprised to learn the rest of the walking world sometimes has to struggle to make their voice heard.

He said: “Racewalking is the most popular sport in Saransk. Maybe, it’s because we have been successful on the world stage. If our walkers train in a public place, they are applauded all the time.”

Potential champions are first spotted at school, and eventually get invited to the center where the only thing they have to do is listen to the coach. If they fail, he says, it’s his fault.

Olga Chegin probably wishes they all would, so her husband could be relieved of his post and spend more time with her. It seems hardly likely. The coach has no intention of giving up the job he claims is as rewarding as anything else he has done in his life.

(A few days later, Warburton had a follow-up story after Vladimir Kanaykin broke the World’s 20 Km record in the IAAF Challenge in Saransk, which included a description of Kanaykin’s daunting training regime.)

One of the least expected rewards for Vladimir Kanaykin after breaking the World record for the 20 Km racewalk at the IAAF World Racewalking Challenge Final was a live goat. Whether the unusual gift was a tradition in this part of the world isn’t clear, and thankfully what was certain was that no celebratory sacrifice was intended, rather the men’s race winner was required to somehow cart the trussed-up animal back to his home village of Atyrievo—north of this racewalking mad town.

It came as a relief for a queasy Luke Adams, who was able to keep his breakfast after finishing second, and although the goat’s fate is unknown, it’s doubtful if its new owner is also going to disappear without trace.

Although the perceived wisdom is that athletes prefer medals to records, Kanaykin reckoned the eclipse of Jefferson Perez’s four-year-old mark ‘more tahn compensated’ for his DNF at the World Championship 50 Km in August. The 22-year old has had his fair share of disappointments in the past with DQ’s, but this year, apart from Osaka, a nippy 77:36 at the Russian Championships and a 50 Km European Cup win in Leamington, England in May demonstrated his flexibility at Olympic distances.

The walker himself believed the record was a surprise, but one suspects he and his coach Victor Gegin were being a tad reserved about what was expected. Nothing has been left to chance in Kanaykin’s rise from World Junior champion to favorite for a gold medal at the Beijing Olympics next year. Not least a training program that even Gegin believes is a ‘bit special’.

He added: “I have looked after 20 World champions over the last 20 years—but it’s

only once every five years someone like Vladimir comes along. Straight from the start it was clear he had what it takes to reach the top. Now it’s up to the judges.”

Gegin lost no opportunity over the Challenge Final weekend to make his point to visiting walk officials that he hoped they would agree with him on what constitutes ‘fair walking’. In fact, after the race, as the genial host, Gegin dished out gifts of vodka to slow down the departing train of athletes and officials, but not enough for him to get off in time, necessitating an assistant to hightail it after Gegin in a car and collect him at the train station. If Kanaykin’s training regime is to be believed, the potential gold medalist will be able to walk between stations without breaking sweat.

Gegin revealed not only every detail about the Saransk Center for the first time to an IAAF journalist, he laid bare an average three days in the life of his boy wonder.

Wake-up time every day is 6 am, with a small cup of tea and a biscuit the only immediate sustenance for Russia’s walking glitterati. Everyone at the Center has their own program, including Kanaykin. His regime leading up to a championship is enough to make even international walker draw breath.

A typical Friday morning requires 8 x 2 Km with each repetition no more than 7:50. A five-minute kilometer between each effort is the allowed recovery period. In the afternoon around 4 pm, Kanaykin does 15 km at around 4:45 pace. On Saturday morning, he walks only one session of 40 km at 4:45 pace.

The final session of the week is 25 km on Sunday morning, where he is required to walk the first 20 at 4:15 pace—and then, if 1:23:00 for the distance isn’t enough—the final demand is 5 km in 20:00 or less!

Kanaykin won’t be drawn on which session daunts him the most. “Everything is important to win races,” he claimed with a poker face. But he smiled at the idea the folk in his village were planning to rename a street in his honor following the World record. “I’m not sure they will,” he said, “but that would be a marvelous way to celebrate what’s been a great end to the season.” Better one imagines, than eating goat stew for the next month.

Let’s Have Some Results

1 Mile, Providence, R.I., Dec. 29–1. Matthew Forgues (15), Maine 7:29.46 **2.** Tyler Campbell, Maine 8:15.89 **H.S. 1600 meters, Gorham, Maine, Dec. 29–1.** Matt Bolton 8:29.71 **2.** Charlie Swerdlow 8:31.51 **1 Mile, Providence, R.I., Dec. 29–1.** Destiny Lalane, N.Y. 8:36.50 **2.** Kelsey Burglund, N.Y. 9:05.01 **1 Mile, Cambridge, Mass., Jan. 12–1.** Matt Forgues 7:26.87 **2.** Lauren Forgues 7:51.75 **3.** Rich McElvery 8:28.51 **4.** Bob Ullman 8:33.97 **5.** Stephen Peckiconis 8:51.59 **6.** Natasha Plotkin 9:08.15 **7.** Tom Knatt 9:33.72 **Dartmouth Relays 1 Mile, Hanover, N.H., Jan. 13–Joanne Dow 6:53.44 2.** Lauren Forgues 7:29.05 **3.** Christie Bernier 8:31.68 **4.** Nina Yang 8:41.17 **5.** Dan Ping He 9:12.15 **6.** Natalie Bauman 9:15.66 **7.** Niccole Court-Menendez 9:24.27 **8.** Emily Reed 9:27.63 **9.** Sara Adams 9:48.04 **10.** Kelley Baickle 9:53.58 **3 Km, Kingston, R.I., Jan. 19–11.** Michael Kazmierczak 13:43.95 **2.** Matthew Forgues 14:21.87 **3.** Lauren Forgues 14:33.64 **3 Km, Cambridge, Mass., Jan. 20–1.** Joanne Dow 13:27.1 **2.** Matthew Forgues 14:09.5 **3.** Lauren Forgues 14:55.2 **4.** Bob Ullman (59) 16:36.2 **5.** Tori Cooper 16:44.3 **6.** Christie Bernier (15) 16:46.6 **7.** Stephen Peckiconis (48) 17:02 **8.** Larry Epstein (49) 17:53.1 **9.** Tom Knatt (68) 18:03.6 **10.** Nicole Court-Menendez (13) 18:36.6 **H.S. 1500 meters, New York City, Dec. 22–1.** Nina Yang 7:37.64 **2.** Dang Ping He 7:54.85 **3.** Kelly McCann 8:09.84 **4.** Yun Zhi Lu 8:22.46 **5.** Connie Chang 8:26.4 **6.** Yangche Dolma 8:28.56 **7.** Liwei Mao 8:57.57 **9.** Hui Li Zhu 8:58.5 (27 finishers) **1 Mile, New York City, Dec. 23–1.** Anine Stanley 8:28.49 **2.** Valerie Piro 9:28.79 **3.** Naomi Kim 10:34.90 **3 Km, same place–1.** Erin Taylor 14:39.90 **2.** Nina Yang 16:32.10 **3.**

Dan Ping He 16:51.50 Men-1. Leonidas Romero 14:19.98 2. Bruce Logan 16:35.97 3. Juan Veitia 18:14.72 **1 Mile, New York City, Dec. 28**-1. Maryanne Daniel 7:58.15 2. Melody Penny 8:47.78 3. Darla Yoeig 9:00.94 4. Diana Quinde 9:40.81 **3 Km, same place**-1. Danping Ite 17:36.67 2. Yangchen Dolma 18:11.40 3. Connie Cheng 18:18.62 **H.S. Girls 1500 meters, New York City, Jan. 5**-1. Leah Buletti 7:09.41 2. Emilija Vaskyte 7:23.81 3. Catie Davis 7:24.59 4. Destiny Lalane 7:46.03 5. Kelsey Burglund 7:58.57 6. Courtney Garrison 8:06.37 7. Dana Battaglia 8:09.06 8. Arame Mboov 8:10.07 9. Yangchew Polma 8:18.99 10. Tyeasha Savage 8:19.04 (32 finishers, 3 DQ) **3 Km, Rochester, N.Y., Dec. 30**-1. Mike Tarantino 13:00.29 2. Dave Talcott (47) 15:15.39 3. Laura Feller 15:40.17 4. Michelle Clarke (18) 15:56.80 5. Chelsea Conway (18) 16:36.18 6. Lindsay Conway 17:13.22 7. Emily Davis (18) 17:14.41 8. James Miner (59) 17:55.40 **44th Annual Asbury Park, N.J. Polar Bear 10 Mile, Dec. 29**-1. Andres Chocho, Ecuador 1:14:14 2. Rich Luettchau 1:19:19 3. John Soucheck 1:22:33 4. Dave McGovern 1:31:37 5. John Fredericks 1:39:12 6. Tom Quattrocchi 1:40:23 Women-1. Loretta McGovern (nee Schuellein) 1:32:37 2. Panse Geer 1:40:28 3. Maria Paul 1:50:20 **3 Km, Cedarville, Ohio, Jan. 18**-1. Susan Randall 15:12.87 2. Tina Peters, Goshen College 15:28.11 3. Amanda Johnson, Lindsey Wilson U. 16:05 4. Allison Chin, H.S. soph. 17:01 5. Allie Berry, H.S. Frosh 17:19 6. Katie Malinowski, Cornerstone U. 18:26 (10 finishers) Men-1. Seth Campbell, Cedarville U. (Still in his first year of racewalking) 14:10.81 2. Doug Johnson 14:14.84 3. Josh Wiseman, Cedarville U. (First walking race) 15:02.98 4. Jake Gunderkline 15:41 5. John Randall, H.S. soph.. 15:46 6/ Brad Sinick, Malone Col. 15:50 7. Chris Schmid 16:22 8. Ed Fitch 17:07

1 Mile, Cedarville, Jan. 19-1. Allison Chin 8:44.07 2. Allie Berry 8:45.81 Boys-1. John Gunderkline 7:47.03 2. John Randall 7:47.91 3. Nick Niehaus 9:07 **3 Km, Marshall, Missouri, Jan. 19**-1. Patrick Storupe 12:37.08 2. Chris Tegtmeier, Concordia U. 12:52.66 3. Thiago Ferreira, Missouri Valley 14:25.12 A Junior from Brazil) 4. Tom Stolee, Concordia a5:03.09 5. Nate Dreher, Concordia 15:16.30 6. Chris Denning, Concordia 15:35.12 7. Geoff Karhoff, Central Methodist 16:08 8. John Ripke 16:25 Women-1. Emily Hansen, Concordia 18:48.57 **1 Mile, Pharr, Texas, Dec. 28**-1. Ricardo Vergara (17) 6:53 2. Roberto Vergara (17) 6:57 3. Alex Chavez (14) 7:34 4. Lauren Forgues (19), Maine 7:44 5. Erin Taylor, N.J. 7:47 6. Leah Buletti (16), N.Y. 8:00 7. Claudia Ortiz (14) 8:38 8. Jonathan Brown (17), Maryland 8:38 9. Christie Bernier (15), Maine 8:54 10. Ariana Guzman (13) 9:02 11. Kelsey Bruns (12) 9:19 12. Diana Flores (13) 9:19 13. Emily Reed (15), Maine 9:27 14. Josie Vargas (12) 9:57 15. Jeniffer Vargas (10) 9:55 (34 finishers) **5 Km, Pharr, Jan. 2**-1. Ricardo Vergara 24:05 2. Roberto Vergara 24:54 3. Alex Chavez 26:57 4. Leah Buletti 27:01 5. Christie Bernier 29:20 6. Adrian Jaime 29:20 7. Peter Armstrong (62), N.M. 30:26 8. Jonathan Brown 30:56 9. Claudia Ortiz 31:01 10. Diana Flores 31:30 11. Jorge Herrera (66), Mexico 31:52 12. Emily Reed 32:29 13. Benjamin Lopez (59), Mexico 33:13 14. Corina Ortiz (17) 33:15 15. John Knifton (68) 33:27 (55 finishers) **National Masters and Women's National 50 Km, Houston, Jan. 6**-1. Rodrigo Moreno (41), Columbia 4:29:41 2. Ian Whatley (48) 5:04:07 3. Albert Medina (47) 5:20:33 4. Max Walker (51) 5:33:32 5. Juan Yanes (58) 5:43:51 6. Heidi Hauch (45) 5:54:51 (Women's national champion) 7. Steve Hoyer (5) 6:09:18 8. Duane Staley (45) 6:09:19 9. Cathy Mayfield (56) 6:31:52 (US 55-59 record) DNF-Matt Boyles, Andreas Gustafsson, Karen Karavanic, Hugh Kuchta, Don Lawrence, Steve McCullough, Sherry Watts (Can.) DQ-Peter Bayer, and Jennifer Marlorough (Great to see 18 starters in a 50) **5 Km, Aurora, Col., Dec. 29**-1. Jan Hill (49) 32:15 **1 Hour, Kentfield, Cal., Nov. 25**-1. Gharfara Rezak 11,215 meters 2. Kevin Killingsworth 10,735 3. Shoja Torabian 10,386 4. Alex Price 5 Jim Beckett 10,083 6. Jack Bray 9689 7. Ed Lane 8732 8.

Joseph Anderson 8705 (16 finishers) **1 Hour, Kentfield, Dec. 1**-1. Jack Bray 9279 2.

Pack Your Kit and Get With It-At the Races

Fri. Feb. 1	National USATF Indoor 1 Mile, New York City (D)
Sun. Feb. 3	5 Km, Denver, 9 am (H) Indoor 1600 and 3000 meters, Arlington, Vir. (S)
Sat. Feb. 9	Indoor 5 Km, Franklin, Indiana (B) 2.8 Miles, Seattle ©) 50 Km Olympic Trials, Miami Indoor 1 Mile, Cedarville (M)
Sun. Feb. 10	5 Km, Denver, 9 am (H) 15 Km, Los Angeles area (Y) Indoor Meet, Kenosha, Wis. (I)
Sun. Feb. 17	5 Km, Denver, 9 am (H) Ohio 1500 and 3000 meters, Ada (M) 300 meters, Bethel U., Minn. (V) Indoor Mall 3 Km, Milford, Conn. ((W)
Fri. Feb. 22	National USATF Indoor 3 Km Women, 5 Km Men, Boston (D)
Sat. Feb. 23	Indiana Indoor 5 Km Championship, Franklin (B) Pacific Assn. 1 Hour, Los Gatos, Cal. (J) Indoor 3 Km, Columbia, MO (F) Indoor 5 Km, Greencastle, Indiana (K) Florida 15 Km and Open 20 Km, Coconut Creek, Fla. (Q)
Sun. Feb. 24	10 Km, Santa Ana, Cal. (Y)
Sun. March 2	Los Angeles Marathon (R)
Sat. March 8	2.8 Miles, Seattle (C) Metropolitan Indoor 3 Km/1 Mile, Youth 1500 m, New York City (G) Indoor 5 Km, Indianapolis (B) 5 and 20 Km, Huntington Beach, Cal. (R) Indoor 5 Km, Indianapolis (B)
Sun. March 16	USATF National Masters Indoor 3 Km, Boston (D)
Sat. March 22	World Cup 20 Km Trials, Men and Women, Eugene, Oregon (D)
Fri. March 28	World Cup Jr. 10 Km Trials, Men and Women, Hauppauge, N.Y. (D)
Sun. March 30	Mt. SAC Relays 5 and 10 Km ®)
Sun. April 6	Indiana 5 Km, Indianapolis (B)
Sat. April 12	

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From Heel To Toe

Laird ahead of his time? In the Looking Back feature this month you will see where four-time Olympian Ron Laird was disqualified in a 1 Mile race in Chicago in 1963. We quote Chris McCarthy's comments on that DQ. "Laird had been working on a real screwball short stride, which is supposed to have a magical effect on one's leg speed. Actually, all it accomplished was to ruin an otherwise basically good style. Judging in Chicago is now definitely up to par as warnings and DQ's are allotted where necessary. Laird, incidentally, has not only gone back to his old style, but is now taking lessons from Matt Rutyna in a determined effort to master the European" type of hip swing that he (Laird) first saw utilized to brilliant advantage by Len Spirin in Moscow in 1958. Rutyna, from Poland, is, as we have said before, far and away the best stylist we've seen. In fact, he's the only really good stylist we've ever seen." I don't remember if I took that as an insult at the time. But, a little advice on training from Matt 3 or 4 years earlier set me on a path that led to seeing the Russians in person in Moscow in 1961, in Tokyo in 1964, and in Kiev in 1965. Matt was in Tokyo, too, representing his native Poland (and also in Mexico City in 1968), while still living in Chicago, where he remains to this day, a good friend and loyal ORW subscriber. And everyone now and then he pops up with superb performances in World Masters meets. Anyway, regarding that heading about Laird perhaps being ahead of his time. That refereed to the screwball short stride that got him thrown out of that Chicago race before he turned to Matt for advice. Also from Poland was Jerzy Hausleber, who Ron and I met in Gdansk during that 1965 tour. A year later Jerzy was in Mexico as the national coach, where he was developing the the quick-turnover, high-leg-speed technique that has revolutionized the sport. Not sure how what Ron was experimenting with briefly to McCarthy's disgust compared with what we see today, but perhaps this reminiscing will elicit some comment on the incident from Ron himself. Which, brings me to the letting you know that Ron is recovering nicely from some very serious bypass surgery at his home in Ashtabula, Ohio. He collapsed outside his home in early December and was rushed to the emergency room and then to the Cleveland Clinic. He is now back to doing 1 Hour strolls and has decided that the blood thinner that he abandoned last spring in favor of some herbs, supplements, or whatever is an essential part of his regimen. . . **2007 USATF Masters Racewalking Awards;** Female Racewalker of the Year--Pansuleta Geer Male Racewalker of the Year--Jack Starr. Age Group Awards: 35-39--Philip Dunn 40-44--Teresa Vaill and John Soucheck 45-49--Marcia Rutledge and Ray Sharp 50-54--Debbi Topham and

Mark Green 55-59--Marianne Martino and Michael Wiggins 60-64--Pansuleta Geer and Leon Jasionowski 65-59--Kathy Blaser and Paul Johnson 70-74--Shirley Dockstader and Jack Bray 75-59--Grace Moreman and Jack Starr 80-84--Miriam Gordon and Marvin Goldenberg 85-89--John Levinsohn. . . **Heppner Award TO Michta.** The North American Racewalking Institute announced that CW Post University Senior Maria Michta has been named the recipient of the Al Heppner Award in racewalking for 2007. The Heppner Endowment Fund established this annual award as a permanent vehicle for members of the U.S. racewalking community to aid college age racewalkers who demonstrate Olympic level promise as did the late Al Heppner. Maria was the recipient of this award two years ago and since that time she has risen in the ranks of U.S. 20 Km walkers and has already met the USATF "A" standard for the U.S. Olympic Trials to held in Eugene, Oregon in July. Maria moved into contention for top national honors this year with her fourth place finish in the National 20 and her times are now in the range of the IAAF Olympic "B" standard. It appears that if her training continues on as it has progressed so far Maria will be a force to contend with at the Trials. Her accomplishments to date are in the best tradition of Al Heppner's rise to Olympic Trials status and have earned her the \$2500 award. Maria has maintained a straight A average at CW Post and will be headed on to a PhD in the Biological Sciences as she prepares for the 2012 Olympic Games. . . **More Awards and Honors.** Among winners of President's Awards at the USATF Convention were Ron and Maryanne Daniel for their efforts as racewalk administrators, volunteers, and officials and Don DeNoon, race director and organizer of the NACAC Cross Country Championships and Racewalks. Racewalker Gayle Johnson has been named to the USATF Masters Hall of Fame. Gayle, now in Columbia, Missouri, has won 15 National Masters titles and holds eight age group records. She was a five-time racewalker of the year in the 45-49 age group. Gayle started walking while in Columbus teaching in the Veterinary School at Ohio State. She received some guidance from your editor before the more capable Wayne Armbrust, then coach of the Ohio Track Club, took over the reins, in more ways than one. I had the privilege of giving away the bride at their wedding before they moved to Columbia for Gayle's new job at the University of Missouri. Gayle has had some injury problems over the past couple of years but is gearing for a comeback to the racewalking arena. Finally, one of the great figures of our sport, known to one and all, Elliott Denman, has been named to the New York University Athletic Hall of Fame and will be inducted in May. In the fall, Elliott completed the New York City Marathon for the 29th consecutive year, racewalking, of course. Wait, that was final. Two more Another Hall of Fame inductees. Chad Eder was inducted into the Cedarville University (Ohio) Athletic Hall of Fame. Flashed across the racewalking scene in the mid '90s with a 20 Km best of 1:28:57 in 1995 and participation in the 1996 Olympic Trials. Chad retired from the sport upon graduation. Attention the induction ceremony was Jill Zenner Cobb, ranked among the top U.S. walkers from 1997 to 2003, another Cedarville grad who had been inducted in 2006. . . **More losses.** It seems that we have been reporting a lot recently on deaths in our racewalking community. Lou Neishloss reports to me the deaths of George Casper, Sam Monastero, and Carl Kurr in the Philly area. These guys were all great veterans of the sport when I came into it in the late '50s. Sam passed away about 6 months ago, according to Lou, but not before setting an age 86 record in the 440. George Casper had a stroke and died quietly. Carl died in a nursing home after having both legs amputated due to diabetes. Lou himself is doing well at age 81 and recently had surgery for clogged arteries in his right leg and is ready to start walking with the English stroll he learned from Ron Laird about half-a-century ago. **Knifton expounds.** John Knifton, who won 14 U.S. titles in the '60s and '70s and now lives in Texas was quoted in an article on the benefits of racewalking in an Austin paper. We quote from that article: Yet as runners age, the pounding takes its toll on back, knees, and ankles, so runners become

walkers. But for those that still have that competitive edge, there's another alternative. . . "It looks strange," said racewalker John Knifton. "At the very minimum, it looks different" Beyond strange and different, some people would say it looks, charitably, downright goofy. "Yeah, well, you know, goofy is in the eye of the beholder, but it's certainly different, you have to admit that," Knifton said. In fact, in Knifton's native England and in this country, there is a long tradition of racewalking, but the sport has been in decline. "We haven't got the body of people that we even had 30 years ago," Knifton said. That is something Knifton said he wants to change. "I think we have a little bit of a mission in that I think racewalking has a lot to offer. The advantage of racewalking is that it gets you there a little quicker. It gets you a little more vigorous so you use a few more calories, and it's fun," he says. "If you get out every day, you'll see great results, and that's what I do." John is leading workshops on racewalking in Austin. . . **World Cup Trials.** The U.S. team for the 2008 World Cup of Racewalking in Cheboksary, Russia May 10-11 will be conducted at three sites. 50 Km-Miami, Florida, May 9; 20 Km Men and Women-Eugene, Oregon, March 30; Junior 10 Km, Men and Women-Hauppauge, N.Y., April 6. The top five in the 50 and 20 km races will qualify, along with the top three Juniors, both men and women. . . **A place for office supplies.** Red Renard, now in Florida, has been an active and respected racewalker for many years. He and his wife Kathy have five kids, two of them on the autism spectrum. Since insurance does not cover any of these kids' therapy, the Renards have opened www.9to5products.com selling office supplies and furniture in order to pay these therapy costs. All of the business profits go to therapy, as they have day/night jobs to cover living expenses. 9 to 5 LLC is a legitimate business in the state of Florida and they can ship anywhere in the U.S. So, they ask you to check the website and consider the products if you have office supply needs. . . **From Wayne Armbrust.** Thiago Ferreira, who was fourth in last year's NAlA meet and who walked a 14:25 3 Km recently, is a junior from Sao Paulo and is number one in his class at Missouri Valley with a 4.00 GPA. He never participated in track and field until he came to Missouri Valley. He got started because his roommate was on the cross country team and he came with him to practice one day. He was the number four runner on the team last season with a best 8 Km time of 27:03. When he finished fourth in the walk at the NAlA Indoor Meet last year, it was only his fifth race (running or waling) ever. Thiago is another example of an athlete with no prior walking experience (in his case none at all!) Being successful in the NAlA. He joins current and recent successful NAlA walkers with no previous experience Matt Boyles, Partick Stroupe, and Chris Tegtmeier. You NAlA coaches out there: You may have someone like these athletes already on your team! Just because an athlete has never walked before doesn't mean he/she can't be a winner in the NAlA and beyond! Have your best endurance athletes try walking. A good candidate might be your steeplechasers due to the coordination and core strength required for the hurdles and water jump. . . **World Record.** Vladimir Kanaykin's 1:17:16 performance at 20 Km as he won the IAAF Racewalking Challenge Final in Saransk has been ratified as a new world record. It better the 1:17:21 of Jefferson Perez on Oct. 23, 2003 in France. . . **Shoes.** Mike Randall, husband of racewalker Susan Randall, has been importing racewalking shoes from Asia after Susan brought some back from a trip back home. He now has more in stock, but they are going quickly. He reports he has sold more than 100 pairs in the last 8 months and had only two customers who did not like them. If you are looking for a good racewalking check the web site at www.mrcg.net/shoes.asp.

North American Racewalk Foundation

A couple of months ago (see November issue) Elaine Ward, founder of the North American Racewalk Foundation (NARF) in 1986 announced that she was relinquishing the reins of that organization and that Tom Eastler would succeed her as President. Tom will be

assisted by A.C. Jaime as Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer and Sue Eastler as Secretary, with a new secretary to be appointed when Tom and A.C. fill out a new Board of Directors.

Shortly after Elaine's announcement, Tom released the following communication:

As A.C., Sue, and I begin what we envision to be an expanded program in funding youth and collegiate racewalking development, we have already added a new fund to the two funding programs sponsored by NARI (North American Racewalking Institute, NARF's non-profit institute.). Currently, we have our very popular Al Heppner Fund, which annually awards a \$2500 stipend to a collegiate 20 Km racewalker, in order to keep the award at \$1500 per year, we need to fund raise more than that sum annually to keep our Heppner account principal at \$25,000 or more. We are always ready and willing to accept your donation (to NARI, 621 North 10th Street, Suite C, McAllen, TX 78501-4513, Attn: A.C. Jaime) no matter what amount for the Heppner Award so that we can continue to assist our next generation of Olympic 20 and 50 Km walkers. Our second fund, and one that has been very productive lately, is NARI's Youth Development Fund. Monies collected for this fund find their way to helping groups of youth racewalkers and individual walkers compete in national and international competitions. We are also open to gifts for this program.

It gives me great pleasure to announce a new NARI fund, dedicated to elite junior racewalking education and competition. The fund is named the National Junior Elite Racewalking Endowment Fund (NJEREF). I have just opened this fund with a gift of \$1321.88, and our current goal is to raise this minor amount to more than a million dollars to provide a major annual funding source for racewalk camps and racewalk competitions for elite junior age racewalkers (ages 14-49). The principal in the fund will never be spent, and only interest accruing on that principal will be used for these funding purposes.

I will soon announce the composition of our New Board of Directors and Advisory Board, and begin solicitation for funds in earnest. My first proposal for potential racewalking philanthropists is aimed at those who have had a wonderful career of racewalking and who would like to see the ranks of racewalking grow past the great number there used to be into greater numbers. I would challenge all of you, and you know who you are, to consider giving the gift that keeps on giving, long after you have made that last great racewalk into eternity. How can I do this you ask. Simply include NARI's endowment fund account in your will or as a target for current and future giving (at any level), or even consider leaving us a piece of property of any kind that we can then turn into endowment funds. Endowments are great since every dollar you give keeps on working because it is never spent, only the interest on it is ever used to support racewalking activities. NARI is a 501.C3 non-profit, tax exempt entity, and your gift will be acknowledged as a tax exempt gift with all of the appropriated IRS paperwork.

Thanks to Elaine for all the wonderful work she has done for youth and junior racewalking in the U.S. all these years.

Enjoy the long walks? Maybe this is for you.

ExtraMileEndurathon

From Uli Kamm

Dear Walking Friends,

A group of 25 or so participants walks together on approximate 4 mile loops until only one walker is left. He/she gets \$1,000. No sleep breaks ... recently in Las Vegas it took 31 hours, in Buenos Aires 102 hours. That's "ExtraMileEndurathon". The top four at every event are qualified for the World Championship in Las Vegas in December, where the winner gets \$10,000. These charity events are conducted globally, see www.ExtraMileEndurathon.com Join us in beautiful Boulder, Colorado on May 30, where I am Race Director for the

ExtraMileEndurathon. You get all the details at www.ultrawalk.com. Please spread the word.

The Group always stays together and no one gets left behind. This is due to the nature of this event, where the journey is the reward, since there is no finish line and speed is self regulated by the genius of Group-Dynamics. The common competitive and aggressive attitude of "regular" races with a finish line, where speed is important, don't appear at Extra Mile Endurathons. When you walk and talk with other walkers over an extended period of hours and maybe days, get to meet their friends and families and become friendly with them while sharing food and experiences, foundations for friendships for life are laid."

Be part of the Team, walk as long as you want.

Please let me know through the ultrawalk site if you have questions.

Happy walking, Ulli

Nashua Man Shaves Off His Decades-Old Beard In the Name of Good Will

By Dean Shalhoup

Nashua, N.H. Telegraph, Jan. 21, 2008

(Bob Keating is a long-time racewalker in New England who won the National 100 Km and the National 100 Mile in 1982. He completed 100 mile events in '81, '82, '84, and '93, with a best of 19:19:31 in the '82 National win, and now well known in Masters circles and as a man with a great heart.)

A few minutes past 2 on a recent afternoon, Bob Keating settled into a barber's chair in a well-known downtown Nashua tonsorial parlor. Thirty-three minutes later, another man stood up from the same seat, brushed himself off and gave Bob's wife, Hilary, a big kiss. Or so it seemed.

The "new" man, truth be told, was still the same Bob Keating—at least on the inside. Externally, though, was a different story. In those 33 minutes, barber Sue Reynolds and her trusty clipper—make that two clippers; the first one died on her—took Keating's facial appearance back 40 years.

With Hilary, friend Jim Tollner, and several others reveling in the carnival-like atmosphere at Chuck's Barber Shop, Reynolds chopped and hacked and buzzed away at Keating's trademark bushy beard and oft-disheveled, Einstein-like hair until his entire beard, and much of his hair was in clumps on the floor.

By itself, all the fun that everyone, especially Keating, had in carrying out this exercise made it worth doing. But Keating's main motivation wasn't laughs—although there were plenty—it was rooted in the long-standing commitment to community service and helping out agencies that help people. Specifically, the Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter was the beneficiary of Keating's beard-shaving stunt, an idea that was hatched by fellow board member Tollner and his wife Patty at the agency's recent dinner and auction, one of its major annual fund raisers.

"A speaker was talking about the homeless and how most homeless men seem to have beards...I looked over at Bob, I thought of Youkilis...and it hit me," Tollner said. Tollner spoke, of course, of Red Sox first baseman Kevin Youkilis, who in November shaved his trademark goatee in exchange for a \$4,000 donation by the Gillette Company to his charity "Kevin Youkilis Hits for Kids." "I thought, if it worked for Yook in Boston, it can work for Bob In Nashua."

He whispered his idea to Patty, "She said, 'you leave that poor man alone'", Tollner said with a laugh, "But I kept looking over at him and thinking, yeah, why not ask anyway. Keating, meanwhile, wondered why the Tollners kept looking his way and smiling. "Finally, they came over during a break and made their pitch," Keating said.

A psychotherapist who specializes in marriage and family counseling, Keating is at once chatty and soft-spoken, a joke-cracker who laughs at others' jokes, as well. He's also a lean fit man, thanks largely to his hobby of nearly 30 years—competitive racewalking—in which he's won numerous regional and national titles.

"We were reasonable—we said 'think about it, we'll be back in 20 minutes for your answer,'" Tollner said. But knowing Keating and his dedication to the soup kitchen, the Tollners were confident there was a razor in their friend's future. Mutual respect sealed the deal.

"It was an easy decision...I couldn't say no to Jim, knowing how much he's done for the soup kitchen," Keating said. They stood up and announced the agreement.

When all was said and done, some \$20,000—double their goal—had poured in. Half of that was attributable to Keating's promise to shave.

"Our son insisted that if he's going to shave his beard, he has to have his hair trimmed too," Hilary quipped as her husband walked to the barber chair, taking his final steps as a hairy man. "One of the best things about this is ice cream," Keating said. "I love it, but have always found it really tricky to eat."

A squirmy, chattering Keating put Reynolds' skills to the test. "Hold still," she commented, "or I'll take off an ear." Keating obeyed. "Yes, we want to keep the epidermis intact," he said. A few more clips and snips, and voila—the "new" Bob Keating had emerged.

"You're going home with a different man," someone commented to a laughing Hilary. But the Keating everyone knows and appreciates was still there. "Wow, what a difference," he said as he stood up and leaned closer to the mirror. "This was a lot of fun. I'm glad I did it. It's a small gesture that makes a lot of sense."

New York High School Racewalkers Injured On Way To Race

(I have several reports on this accident, which occurred on Saturday, January 12 as Erin Taylor was transporting several New York City high school girls to compete in the racewalk event at the Dartmouth Relays in Hanover, N.H.. I draw here primarily from a report that was published in the New York Daily News four days after the incident, since it is more coherent than those published immediately after the accident and includes updates on athletes' condition.)

Stuyvesant High racewalker Valerie Piro was left paralyzed from waist down and teammate Lucia Hsiao seriously injured when a van driven by Coach Erin Taylor crashed in Vermont. "It's the call you never want to get," said Alfred Piro, Valerie's father. The Stuyvesant H.S. student most seriously injured when a van driven by her track flipped is paralyzed from the waist down, but the girl's family is hoping she'll regain use of her legs.

"It's the phone call you never ever want to get: the hospital saying your daughter has been in an accident and they're asking permission to perform surgery," Alfred said. After rushing to be by her side. Valerie, a 16-year-old racewalker, has been upbeat and e-mailing friends from her hospital bed since the van carrying her and other students crashed Saturday in Vermont. The girls were heading to a track meet in New Hampshire.

When the van flipped, Valerie and her classmate Lucia Hsiao, 16, were seriously injured. Taylor also was hurt. Police still were investigating the cause of the accident, but noted that the road was dry at the time of the wreck. Officers said Taylor and the eight

girls—six from Manhattan's Stuyvesant High and two from the Health Professions and Human Services High School, also in Manhattan—were wearing seat belts. Valerie, who lives in Brooklyn, was flown by helicopter to Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, N.H. Lucia and Taylor were driven there by ambulance. Mark Green, a good Samaritan who stayed with the girls at the accident scene until emergency workers arrived, said Valerie immediately asked about her friends. "She was half ejected from the van, her face in the snow, mud, and glass, and all she was concerned with was the safety of others," he said.

Valerie's loved ones have faith she'll fully recover "Such a thoughtful, sweet girl and a wonderful athlete," said Deirdre Touhey, manager of Run for You Life, a fitness store near Valerie's home. "If anybody can pull through this it's Valerie. Taylor, who has clean driving records in New York, New Jersey, and her home state of Oregon, was released from the hospital on Wednesday after being treated for a fractured neck. She is wearing a neck halo. Friends said Taylor, a coach at Stuyvesant for three years is an accomplished racewalker who was training for the Olympic Trials.

"She really cares about these girls and talks constantly about the athletes she coaches, said Taylor's friend Jennifer Marlborough. "Every personal record they have, every race, she's beaming.

At Stuyvesant, one of the nation's premier high schools, classmates of the injured girls said the crash was eerily reminiscent of the March 2006 wreck that claimed the lives of two swimmers from the school. Valerie's and Lucia's parents, who gathered at the hospital, said they don't blame Taylor, who told police officers she has no recollection of the accident. "I'm angry, but not toward the coach," said Lucia's father, Andrew Hziaio, whose daughter suffered fractured vertebrae. "The girls love her."

(Erin Taylor had a best 20 Km of 1:52:25 last year and started the indoor season with an impressive 14:39.70 for 3 Km in December. Piro had a 9:29 mile in the same meet. Somewhere, I had a report that two of the girls did make it on to Dartmouth and walked in the meet—results earlier in this issue—but I can't find that item so I can't tell you who they were.)

All Calories Are Not Created Equal

by Ann Gerhardt, M.D.

(Ann, a racewalker in Sacramento, publishes a newsletter called Dr. G's Medisense in which this article appeared. For more information on the free e-mail newsletter contact Ann at algerhardt@sbcglobal.net.)

For years, nutrition scientists said that a calorie is a calorie, and consuming too many or burning too few causes obesity. Bits of evidence refuting that axiom are trickling into nutrition science. For a long time nutrition research focused on fat vs. carbohydrate, but hints that fructose (a sugar) contributes more than glucose (the "bad sugar" in diabetes) to obesity and diabetes surfaced years ago. Scientists uncovered unsuspected effects of fructose on a variety of metabolic processes, which remained obscure pieces of information with unknown cause and effect until recently.

Now we know much more. We know that fructose increases enzymes (the worker-bee proteins of the body) that make fat. We know that fructose turns off at least three of the body's mechanisms to keep blood vessels open and flexible. We know that it affects hormones that reduce insulin's effectiveness. We know that eating excess fructose leads to high uric acid levels which contribute to high blood pressure.

For those of you who think I've lost my marbles and am making this up, I may have lost my marbles, but I'm not making this up. A lot of this data is very recent and not widely disseminated yet. **All of these metabolic consequences of fructose feed into the Metabolic Syndrome, the constellation of abnormalities that eventually leads to diabetes, high blood**

pressure, obesity, abnormal cholesterol levels and heart disease.

Fructose, a very common sugar molecule, constitutes half of the sucrose in beet or can derived table sugar. The other half is glucose. In addition to beet and cane, fructose occurs naturally in honey, fruit, maple syrup and corn. Fructose tastes sweeter than sucrose or glucose.

In 1957 Richard O. Marshall and Earl R. Kool developed a process whereby an enzyme (glucose isomerase) turns corn sugar's glucose into fructose. The resulting "high fructose corn syrup (HFCS)" with up to 90% fructose, tastes sweeter than table sugar. In 1971, Japanese researchers figured out how to mass produce HFCS, which made it sweet and very cheap. Since the USDA subsidizes corn agriculture with price supports that foster overproduction, we have sustained corn excess and a very cheap route for sugar to your stomach.

HFCS entered the food chain in the mid-1970s. With sweeter sugar, food manufacturers don't need to use as much, making sugary food even cheaper to make. By the 1980s, HFCS-sweetened sodas and juices had flooded the market. Food manufacturers switched to HFCS to sweeten another processed food. Big Gulps replaced 12-ounce Dixie cups. Even yogurt and tomato ketchup, two foods that I somehow thought would be "pure" contain HFCS.

The timing couldn't have been worse. Public health nutritionists, promoting very low fat diets to lower cholesterol, could not predict the effect of HFCS because it hadn't existed before. Sugars are part of the carbohydrate family, so high carb, sweet foods proliferated in the fat phobic 1980s when everyone thought that carbs were "good". Contrary to the low fat promise though, people's waistlines expanded rather than contracted.

It is no coincidence that the obesity epidemic and soaring rates of childhood diabetes and adult metabolic syndrome took off in the 1980s. The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, an ongoing project of the Centers for Disease Control, documents the dramatic ballooning of American's weight. The 1960-62, 1971-74, and 1976-1980 surveys produced consistent levels of obesity and healthy weights. In each of these surveys, about 12% of men and 17% of women were obese and 46% of men and 53% of women were in the "desirable" weight range.

That all changed with the 1988-1994 survey in which obesity jumped to 21% in men and 26% in women, and kept climbing to 17.5% in men and 25% in women in 1999-2000. The rates of overweight but not quite obese are even higher.

What does have to do with you? Your choice of soda vs. tea or mile just graduated from "empty vs healthy calories" to "damaging vs. OK." Perhaps the most insidious impact of fructose is that it drives its own consumption. Excess glucose tells the body "enough already" and the enzyme that degrades it stops working at least for a while. That doesn't happen with fructose. Its enzymes turn on and the body churns any huge amount you give it into energy or fat. Unless those calories are burned during physical activity, most will end up around your middle before they cause disease that kills you.

A calorie is not a calorie, metabolically. Just like the total fat number doesn't tell you how much "bad" saturated and "good" mono saturated fat there is, carbohydrate and sugar totals don't tell you the source of sugar. **Your food label-reading chore now must extend to the ingredients section. You get to make a choice between cost and health when you see the words HFCS or fructose corn syrup.**

LOOKING BACK

45 Years Ago (From the January 1963 Race Walker published by Chris McCarthy)—One mile races were the order of the day. Alex Oakley (6:43.3) edged Felix Cappella (6:45), and Bill Grandy (6:46.3) in Toronto.

Maple Leaf Games. Ron Laird was a subdued fourth, but under 7 minutes. . . In New York, Alan Blakeslee (7:04.3) beat Ron Daniel (7:07) and Bruce MacDonald (7:10). . . Bill Preston won the South Atlantic title in Baltimore with a 7:58.7. . . In Chicago, Ron Laird won in 7:03 ahead of Matt Rutyna (7:28) and then McCarthy beat Rutyna with a 7:27. Matt had 7:36.6. Laird walked 6:42.9 in that one but not without a DQ.

40 Years Ago (From the January 1968 ORW)—Dave Romansky turned in a sparkling 1:15:50 for 10 Miles in Asbury Park, N.J., leaving John Knifton 4 ½ minutes behind. . . The Metropolitan Indoor 1 Mile title went to Ron Daniel in 6:39.7 and Ron Laird won the LA Times Mile in 6:32.9. . . Laird also won the Athens Invitational in Oakland with a 6:28.2. Tom Dooley was second in 6:33.9. . . Laird was named the 1967 recipient of the Ron Zinn Memorial Trophy, repeating his 1966 selection. . . Publisher Jack Blackburn had some commentary on the national political scene (which cost us a subscriber) and Editor Mortland reviewed a Modern Jazz Quarter concert. Walking news was apparently a bit light. . . The ORW's first Dr. John Blackburn Award for the year's outstanding single accomplishment went to Montana's Larry O'Neil for his 100 mile victory in a Columbia, Missouri race, his 19:24:53 performance shattering a national record set in 1878.

35 Years Ago (From the January 1973 ORW)—The Colorado Track Club's 10-Man relay team covered 162 miles 275 yards for a world's walking record in a 24-hour relay. And they did it indoors. Jerry Brown led the effort with an average speed of 7:05.2 for his 17 miles (team members alternated 1 Mile stints). Foyd Godwin averaged 7:29 and Peter Van Arsdale 7:37.4. . . The NAIA 2 Mile went to Steve Tyrer in 15:04, with newcomer Augie Hirt fourth in 15:55. . . Ron Kulik was king of the boards in the East with a 6:40.5 win in the Mets and a 6:35.2 in Philadelphia. Ron Daniel was second in both. In Philly, Howie Palamrachuk, known mostly for his libelous contributions to the infamous *Guano Press* (racewalking's underground paper of that era), was a close third. (Actually, we were mostly entertained, not offended by that paper, which was done in a mean-spirited fashion.) Now a prominent podiatrist, Howie has contributed much to the sports medicine aspects of our sport.

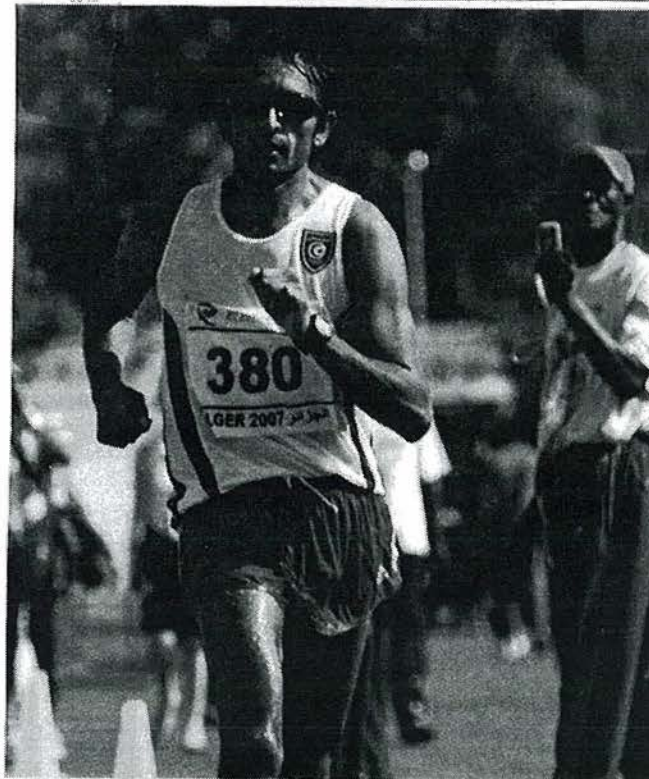
30 Years Ago (From the January 1978 ORW)—The first page and a half were devoted to the editor's discussion of Columbus in the blizzard of '78 and its effect on training and such. . . Steve Pecinovsky edged Chris Knotts for fast time honors in the New Year's Eve 6 Mile Handicap in Springfield, Ohio (a week prior to the blizzard) with a 48:21. Chris had 48:30. However, the handicapping was tough on the fastest qalkers as those two finished sixth and seventh and handicapper Jack Blackburn (50:27) brought up the rear, except for Jack Mortland (50:42).

25 Years Ago (From the January 1983 ORW)—In the Millrose Games, Ray Sharp edged Jim Heiring, covering the mile in 5:46.21—the fastest ever to that date. Heiring was just a second back and Tim Lewis also broke 5:50. (Five years later, Lewis got down to 5:33.53, which remains the world's best, indoors or out.) Tom Edwards had 5:57 in fourth and Jim Mann, way back in ninth, had 6:17. . . Edwards earlier had winning efforts of 6:04 and 6:12, and did 13:55 for a 2 Miler.

20 Years Ago (From the January 1988 ORW)—Dan Pierce won 1987's final National race, the 100 Km held in Houston on Dec. 21. Dan had a 9:36:33 after going through the first 50 in 4:47:26. Dave Waddle was second in 11:01.4 and Alan Price third in 11:11:42. Jeanne Bocci captured fourth in 11:30:28, breaking the Masters Women's 50 Km record (5:31:37) on the way. . . At the same site, Gene Kitts, 40, did 50 Km in 4:23:19. . . Tim Lewis won the Honolulu marathon walking division in 3:36:23, leaving Randy Mimm 15 minutes back.

15 Years Ago (From the January 1993 ORW)—Dave McGovern was a prominent figure with 3 Km indoor times of 12:11.47 in New York City, 12:25.33 at West Point, and 12:04.56 in Cambridge, Mass. Marc Varsan was just 2 seconds back in the Cambridge race and Debbi Lawrence walked a 12:31.89 at the same site for a national record. . . In Princeton, N.J., Ray Funkhouser had a 12:25.9 3 Km win over Sean Albert, whose 12:28.8 was a U.S. junior record. . . Philip Dunn won a Salem, Oregon 5 Km in 22:53.410 with Andrew Hermann second in 22:53.411. (We noted that timing rules don't recognize thousandths of a second, but that apparently they wanted to emphasize that is was a close race. . . Debbi Lawrence also had a 5:53.94 for 1500 meters in Montreal, 11 seconds ahead of Janice McCaffrey

5 Years Ago (From the January 2003 ORW)—Another great ORW typo. In a cover photo of Larry Young, the caption told us that he racewalking's third member of the T&F Hall of Fame and that he was 'deducted' on Dec. 2, 2002. Gosh that's the same date that he was inducted. But, in reality he was not deducted and never will be. . . Curt Clausen won the National 30 Km in Chula Vista, Cal in 2:15:56, more than 9 minutes ahead of Sean Albert. Kevin Eastler was third in 2:26:58. Cheryl Rellinger won the women's title in 2:51:49.



2007 Celebrities. Top left: Hatem Ghoula, Tunisia, winning the All-Africa Games 20 Km. He was third in the World Championships and fourth in the Challenge standings. Top right: World 20 Km Champion Jefferson Perez of Ecuador. Bottom left: Russia's Olga Kaniskina winning the World 20 Km. Bottom right: Russia's Vladimir Kanaykin finishes his World record 20 Km in the Challenge Final.